The houses were all built on the same pattern, only some being taller, wider and of better quality wood and thatch than others. 342

Facing the street in line, each house had a verandah running all along its face, and one step took you up from this into the main room of the house. As you entered, this room extended right up to the roof which sloped very steeply down to its eaves, but about twelve feet in, where the roof was just high enough, a platform upper storey was built, looking over a balustrade into the main room below. This platform storey ended where the sloping roof again became too low at the back. The back portion reaching to the height of the roof was used for kitchen and washing rooms. By this time, in the row of houses containing ours, the ground had sloped down to the creek, and the kitchen was continued as a bamboo platform raised high above the mud on piles.

Grandmother, who had become among the wealthiest in the village, had made enlargements and adaptations within these lines. Her house was wider, with the clearing up of an adjacent house. It contained four door spaces in its face, each door space being a uniform seven feet in width throughout the village. The main floor was of fine polished teak boards, the part below the platform storey was walled off into a bedroom which was very badly ventilated and lighted, the back portion was cleared of all washing rooms and made into a large airy kitchen about 30 feet square, and the platform behind was extended right over the water's edge because we had bought a mooring site further up. On this bamboo platform two hatches were put as bathrooms, containing commodes in the European style, whereas other households walked to the common latrines in the first clearing beyond the street.

The people of Ye lived chiefly by the produce of their gardens, the richer ones like Grandmother sending out to big towns their durians, coconuts, areca nuts, or fish and oysters from the sea, the poorer ones vending fish and vegetables daily around the town, making thatch roofing out of *dani* (nipah) leaves, acting as boatmen up and down the creek, helping to work the gardens and paddy-fields of other families. 244 226 463

My grandmother's household during these years consisted of herself, two aunts, one widow and one spinster, an uncle next to my father in age, my young Uncle Pyant and various cousins, one, two and three wombs removed from us. My elder uncle, Uncle Thet Hnan, had never been out of Ye; after going through the monastery he had worked in the gardens instead of going to an English-teaching school. It gave us an uncanny feeling to see him so like my father in build and general appearance and so dissimilar from him in speech, thought and habits. He now owned gardens up at Chaung-bya, and had five children all of whom had been brought up in Ye. My three boy cousins had been 592

[Ye - Analyst]

527 The younger children of the families also took the precepts, but it was not considered wrong if they felt too hungry or faint to keep to them. Everyone packed up and went home from the resthouse at about four in the afternoon. I found these duty evenings very long and depressing. There was no dinner, my father and mother told beads all evening, and at night their mattresses were removed and they slept only on mats.

428 We were now living in Grandfather's old house. Grandfather had left
• 342 it to the four youngest among his children, and my mother had bought out the shares of the others because she was sentimentally attached to it and could not bear to see it pulled down. To others it had seemed an unwieldy shape taking so much good teak which could have built a compact modern house. My mother set about the task of transforming in into a comfortable domestic family house with a nicely disposed front and back, but it was a difficult task. There was no neat garden plot, no face, no bedrooms, but long stretches of gallery and verandah. We fenced off the well so that the village could continue to use it without infringing our privacy, the old big kitchen was dismantled and a compact kitchen made of one of the store-rooms near the washing platform, the old maternity room was stocked with commodes and made into a lavatory, the powder room was used as box-room. Six of us shared the big bedrooms. The altar, the water-pots and meals continued where they had always been. There was a large expanse of shining floor for visitors to sit on mats, and the head of the long verandah held a few chairs. The stable was cleaned up and given to Apana, now an old and rheumy-eyed man, and the downstairs hall, where a school had been, now held our stocks of rubber.

511 But still there was always so much space, the house seemed vast and
563 empty, and the life so different from our district government houses with
775 a crowd of servants, young men and dependents of all kinds. We felt the change acutely. My sisters were still children who played with each other and had plenty to eat during their short holidays, but I found the evenings silent and sad with the lifeless echoes which the dim light of the floorboards used to send up. I had been to stay at the house for short periods just before my Grandfather died, when I was about three or four years old. Here, where we washed our faces, we looked across to a house now mysteriously barred with a blank wooden face, but then inhabited by *ta-yok chi-thay-mas*, tiny-footed China-women, fabulous creatures according to my nurses, who, though they were slit-eyed and could curse you in an unknown tongue, could be sent reeling back with one touch of a finger. The ta-yok chi-thay-ma had other macabre qualities also. Her child had a big black patch of hair on its arm because it was the reincarnation of his dead sister. At the death of this

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

882 304 and reminiscences of other ceremonies of the kind that they have witnessed. Usually the gold needle is bent round and left in the wound, but poor people sometimes pass a piece of string through and tie it. This is turned round and passed backwards and forwards daily till the sides heal, and then begins the process of enlarging the hole to receive the na-daung, a big tube an inch long and from half an inch to three-quarters in diameter. This takes a very long time, and is less pleasant even than the first boring. Some do it with a gold or thickly gilt metal plate, which is rolled up and passed through the hole. The elasticity of the metal makes it constantly tend to expand, and so the hole is gradually enlarged. A commoner method, however, is by introducing stems of the kaing, or elephant grass. As many of the little stems of the inner blade as will go through are passed in, and daily their number is added to until a considerable width is attained. When kaing grass is not available, little splints of the thekkè kyaung are made use of. This is the ordinary thatch of the poorer sort of houses, and almost universal in the country districts, but forbidden in the large towns on account of its inflammable character. Then, after a time, the nā-kat is brought into use. This is a curious ear-plug, big at both ends, and smaller in the middle, where the two parts screw into one another. The screw is passed through the lobe of the ear, and the other portion is then twisted on. These nā-kat are gradually increased in size, until at last the orifices are large enough to receive the na-daung, the regular ear-cylinders. These are of various make and material, the latter being formerly regulated by the sumptuary laws in independent territory. The royal family, both males and females, had them of gold, richly set with jewels, often a single large brilliant in front, or a diamond surrounded by a ring of emeralds, while the back was a cluster of rubies. The right to wear these was also extended to the higher ministers and their families. Others wear gold, plain hollow tubes, or with the ends filled up with delicate *repoussé* work. Those who cannot afford this content themselves with solid amber plugs, which, when they are without a flaw, are worth three or four pounds sterling apiece. Finally, the poor content themselves with

[369] [342] 301 565

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

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CHAPTER IX

THE HOUSE AND ITS BELONGINGS

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It is singular that in a country where the pagodas and temples will compare in stately grandeur and symmetry of form with the sacred edifices of any part of the world, and where the monastic buildings, though only constructed of wood, strike the most casual observer with their shapely beauty and wealth of decoration; it is singular where there is a taste for such edifices and abundance of the architectural skill necessary to erect them, that the Burman should in the vast majority of cases live in the flimsiest of bamboo huts. The original cause may be found perhaps in the stringent regulations of the Yāzagaing. In native Burma the shape of a man's house was fixed for him by law according to his station in life. All were one-storeyed, save where exceptional royal favour had granted the spire-like roof to a distinguished noble or a feudatory chief. Brick houses were forbidden, from the apprehension that the inhabitants might take it into their heads to turn them into fortifications. Gilding was forbidden to all subjects, and permission to lacquer and paint the pillars of their houses granted to but a very few, and it was expressly laid down that no one should have an arch over his door. This may account for the paltry and even wretched appearance of most villages, but it is undeniable that though nowadays, they are very considerably more substantial, yet a rich man never by any chance thinks of building himself a grand house, and remains firmly by the unpretentious model of his ancestors. This is the more curious, because they will spare no expense to buy gay turbans and bright-coloured pasos for themselves, and costly

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2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

517 silks for their wives. The ordinary explanation is that every one can see what clothes you wear, while few people care to come and spy out what kind of a house you live in, and how you fare. But there can be very little doubt that the real reason is a survival of the idea of the old Yāzagaing, as well as the fact that long years of custom have impressed upon everybody the opinion that there are only two forms of architecture, the secular and the ecclesiastical, and no one, no matter how sure he might be that the Government would take no notice of his ambition, would brave the denunciations of the religious by adding a spire to his house, or even adorning the gable ends with carved pinnacles and flamboyant finials of the monasteries. Consequently the one regular form prevails everywhere.

342 576 The Burman's dwelling, then, is always shaped more or less like a marquee tent, and never more than one storey high, to avoid the humiliating possibility of the feet of some one being over your head. But the whole house stands on posts, so that the floor is seven or eight feet from the ground. It consists often of only one room, usually, however, of two or more, and to the front of the house there is always a verandah, three or four feet lower than the general level of the house, and as often as not quite open to the street, or the garden, or whatever may be in front and always to the sky. [551] The posts which form the main or central part of the house are usually six in number, and all have their names, such as Uyu, Kya-hngan, Nyaung-yan. 353 776 The south post, in the main part of the house, the Thabye-taing, is the best known, as being always adorned with leaves and particularly marked as that in the top of which most probably lives the nat-spirit of the house. A dead body, after being swathed, and while [764] waiting for the coffin, is always placed by it.

341 787 A house ought never to be built till the foundations have been thoroughly dug up and shown to a soothsayer. He will determine, from the substances found, whether it is a lucky place to build a house in or not. It stands to reason that the building cannot be commenced till a lucky day and hour have been sought out. There is considerable care to be observed in the selection of the timber. Posts are masculine, feminine, and neuter. Male posts are of equal size at both

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

ends; females are larger at the base; those which swell out in the middle are a-thet ma-shi—without life; taing bilu, ogre's posts are largest at the top. As a general rule it may be taken for granted that if a house is built with neuter posts, its inmates will always be miserable and unlucky; if the posts are ogres, death and disaster will attend; male posts are easy-going and harmless; females, on the contrary, are fortunate and leading to honour. But it may happen that the character of the piece of ground on which the house is built upsets all these generalisations, so that it is necessary to get a wise man's opinion before you get your posts. The Deittôn gives many instructions on the subject, and among other things mentions how a man's fortune may be calculated from the Hle-ga-tit, the side pieces of the steps which lead up to the verandah. The presence or absence of knots, and if the former, their position, determines the luck of the householder.

Poor people use bamboo instead of wood, and make their walls of mats, woven of the same substance, split up. Occasionally, however, they rise to the dignity of common jungle timber. Richer people make use of the invaluable teak, or of pyinkado (*Xylia dolabriformis*), a wood almost as durable, and equally expensive. White ants will attack neither of these. The walls of such houses are planked. The roof is sometimes composed of small flat tiles, but more commonly of thatch. This consists in most places in the Delta of dani, the leaves of the toddy palm, which are first soaked in salt water, a precaution which prevents insects from destroying them. Up country a species of grass called thekkè is universally used. This style of roofing is very satisfactory in every respect but one. It is cheap, easily put on, reasonably water-tight, but very inflammable, and consequently is not allowed in any of the larger towns in the Province. In the smaller stations, however, it is almost universal, and the consequence is that when one house takes fire, the sparks from it kindle all the others, as a matter of course. Consequently, as an imperative measure of protection, every house is provided with a long hooked bamboo, called a mi-cheit, by means of which to pull off all the thatch as soon as a fire breaks out in the neighbourhood, and in

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

342 addition to this a mi-kat stands beside it. This is a broad
731 griddle, or flapper kind of thing, and its object is to beat out
355 the flame which may be caused by a spark lighting on the roof. In addition to this, in many parts of the country, pots full of water are always kept in readiness on the tops of the houses, so that when the hour of danger comes, the householder may douse his roof, and so do the best for himself. In Mandalay, under native rule, some of the pa-gwets, and other outcasts, patrolled the streets all night, to watch for and prevent fires as much as possible.

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342 Another kind of roofing is wā-kat, a sort of flat tile-like construction, six feet long by two feet broad, made of coarse bamboo matting. Bamboos split in half down the centre, and with the knots smoothed away, are also used. They are placed close together, with the hollow side upwards, extending all the way down from the ridge to the eaves, and over these again are placed others with the rounded side up, the whole presenting rather a curious appearance, but making a very serviceable roof and not nearly so dangerous as the leaf or grass thatching. The leaves of other trees are also occasionally used, but the simplicity and cheapness of the dani roof make it by far the most prevalent in the delta, as grass is elsewhere, notwithstanding its danger. In Rangoon and Maulmein, shingles, that is, small wooden slabs like slates, are being very generally introduced.

In the better class of houses the floors are made of planking, but poorer people have nothing better than a series of whole or split bamboos laid side by side on the cross-beams and tied down with rattans. This is not very pleasant to walk on, and has the further disadvantage of being anything but cleanly, for the spaces between the bamboos offer an irresistible temptation to drop all litter and garbage on to the ground immediately underneath the house, and were it not for the pariah dogs the sanitary condition of the place would soon be very bad.

[565]

352 The house is thus simple enough in its character, but
177-35 the furniture is still more so. Intercourse with the English
369 has indeed brought many Burmans to indulge in English luxuries, and in many houses in Rangoon and the larger district towns, chandeliers, bookcases, pictures, and even

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma (Kachin) AP1
Burmese AP4

Be 231 779

customer has gone his way. It used to be a common thing in the palace, during the late king's reign, to let loose a number of birds for the delectation of foreign worshippers at the golden feet, and the expansion of the royal merit. Ill-natured people said all the birds were recaptured in the next room, and appeared again for the next display of charity; but of that I can say nothing.

Be 342 351

Each house, with its ground, is surrounded by a rude fence more or less substantial according to the character of the district. Where there are many tigers or ill-doers, and especially north of Mandalay, where formerly the Kachins might swoop down any night, this is made very high and strong, and is further rendered effective by a formidable array of sharpened bamboos. Except where the British have taken the matter in hand, the village roads are simply places where the jungle is kept from growing. There is no attempt at metalling; in fact there is no material for the purpose. In some pretentious villages indeed there is a raised path formed of bricks set on edge, and about three feet broad. This is regarded as a public work of great value, and a distinction to the inhabitants of the place. It usually leads to the monastery. In many villages, however, it would be impossible to move about during the rains without some such contrivance. The mud would be too deep, and logs are slippery even to bare feet.

Ba. [563]

Be 487

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Swinging by a couple of ropes from the roof hangs in the centre of the house a rude basket, made snug with a blanket or some old clothes. This is the baby's cradle, and the mother may often be seen sitting by it crooning and gently swaying it backwards and forwards. Some of the lullabies are very clever. I have tried to give a version of one of the most popular, with as near an approach to the metre as practicable. It is sung to the favourite te-dat air.

Be 539

SEIN-NI LA-YAUNG

Clouds in Heaven,
Bright as levin,
Dyed with rosy diamond's light,
Did the Nine Gems
Stud your white hems,

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

about in the streets or among the tombs. If, however, by his talent and virtue, one procures for himself many benefactors, he may receive from them for his habit the following articles, namely, cotton and silk, or cloth of red (of a Thibetan origin) or yellow wool." 792

Candidate. "As I am instructed so will I perform." [342] ●

"Every member of the society must dwell in a house built under the shade of lofty trees. But if, owing to your zeal and virtue, you procure for yourself many benefactors who are willing to build for you a better habitation, you may dwell in it. The dwelling may be made of bamboo, wood, or bricks, with roofs adorned with spires of pyramidal or triangular form."

Candidate. "I will duly attend to these instructions."

"It is incumbent upon an elect to use as medicine the urine of a cow or of a black bullock, whereon lime and the juice of a lemon or other sour fruit has been poured. He may also use as medicines articles thrown out of markets, or picked up at the corners of streets. He may accept for medicinal purposes nutmegs or cloves. The following articles also may be used medicinally—butter, cream, and honey."

Candidate. "As I am instructed so will I perform."

The newly initiated yahan is now warned against the four sins, the commission of any one of which would entail the loss of the dignity he has just attained.

The Kammawā-sayā goes on: "Elect, being now admitted into our society, it is no longer lawful for you to indulge in carnal pleasures, whether with yourself or with animals. He who is guilty of such a sin can no longer be numbered among the perfect. Sooner shall the severed head be joined again to the neck, and life restored to the breathless body, than a pyin-sin who has committed fornication recover his lost sanctity. Beware therefore lest you pollute yourself with such a crime." 792

Candidate. "As I am instructed so will I perform."

"Again, it is unlawful and forbidden for an elect to take things that belong to another, or even to covet them, although their value should not exceed a quarter of a tical (about six annas). Whoever sins even to that small amount is thereby

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma (Mon) AP1
Burmese AP4

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First in the list of personal spirits may be considered the kosaung nats, a kind of confusion of ideas between the proper spirit and the butterfly spirit, and representing as it were the genius of each individual, a kind of materialised conscience. They are twelve in number, six good and six bad, six male and six female, and regulate the life and doings of their *protégé* accordingly as the benevolent or the malevolent gain the upper hand.

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Next to these comes the eing saung nat, very often called Min-magayi, the guardian nat of the house. For his comfort the tops of all the posts in the house are covered with a hood of white cotton cloth, for it is in this situation that he usually takes up his abode. In almost every house, at the end of the verandah in front, you will find a water-pot full of pareityé, water over which certain gathas, magic spells, or religious formulæ have been uttered by the astrologer, or the prior of the district. This water, which is replenished once a month, or oftener in cases of danger from disease, or when a member of the family is absent on a journey, is every now and then sprinkled about the house as a protection against bilus and spectres, ogres and tasés. When the water is consecrated in this nyaungye-o, which is of a special shape, something like an overgrown Indian spittoon, there are always a few twigs and leaves of the thabyé tree floating on the top. These are mostly taken out and hung round about the eaves, but occasionally left in the water. The inordinately superstitious sometimes keep a small thabyé bin (the sacred eugenia) growing in a pot in the house, so that its benign influence may keep harm away. Talaing houses may usually be known by the cocoa-nut hanging up at the south side of the building. This is covered with strips and tags of yellow or red cloth, and is offered to Min-magayi, whom they call the king of the nats. Of these spirits (called kaluk in their language) they say there are thirty-seven distinct varieties, but Min-magayi rules them all. These are the "thirty-seven nats of Burma," but whether they were borrowed by the Burmese from the Talaings or not seems at any rate doubtful. At the beginning of the wet season they always wrap up the cocoa-nut afresh, and when the rains are over make new offerings of money, glutinous rice, eggs, jaggari, and fruit, in order that the eing saung nat may

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2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

a definite period, and money is charged for admission; but the idea is an English one, and opposed as it is to ancient custom and the old free attractions elsewhere, meets with barely enough support to keep it going. The giver of the pwè simply constructs a small roofed enclosure for himself, if the pwè is held on open ground, and fits it up with a bedstead covered with mats as a kind of private box, with a few chairs and plentiful mats round about it. To this reserved space he invites a few of his most intimate friends, sending them the ordinary little palm-leaf packet of pickled tea by the hands of his daughters or sisters. All other places in the circle are open to the first comer, and when a pwè is announced, women may be seen early in the afternoon strolling down, with rolls of mats on their heads, to secure good places. Abundance of refreshments and materials for smoking are taken, for it will be sunrise before the play is over. The commonest place for a pwè, however, is in the street opposite to the giver's house. All traffic is unceremoniously stopped. There is nothing to be done but to hoist up the hinged front wall of your house, or throw open the windows and go out on the verandah, if the construction of the building is more solid, and there you are with the theatre come to your doors. There is no trouble with the stage. A circular space is covered with mats and it is all ready. This is called the pwè-waing. In the centre is a branch of a tree, or the stem of a plantain palm stuck in the ground, which goes by the name of the pan-bin. Yule and others have endeavoured to discover some forgotten meaning for this centre of action, comparing it with the altar of the old Greek stage, but probably it never had any greater significance than to mark the centre of the arena and prevent the audience from crowding in too much so as to curtail the space. The actors when questioned about it always say that it is there to represent a forest, such as forms part of the scene of action in every play. This of course is merely an answer, and not an explanation. Europeans of an inquiring turn are apt to complain of this Burmese (and Scotch) method of supplying information. Why such a phantom attempt at representing a forest should be made, when no effort aims at portraying the

14: Brant E-5 (1949-50) 1954 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

I

THE VILLAGE SETTING AND THE PEOPLE

Tadagale is a suburban community of Lower Burma, about four and one half miles north of the city center of Rangoon, chief port and national capital of the Union of Burma. To reach the village most readily one travels by automobile northward from the city along Prome Road, a main highway, to the junction with Kokine Road, beyond the city limit, on to which one turns eastward. After a quarter mile or so, one again goes northward on to a bumpy, poorly surfaced road which soon becomes dirt and terminates abruptly, after another quarter mile, at a small bridge. Tadagale means 'small bridge,' and it is after this bridge that the village is named. A few steps walk over the bridge brings one almost to the center of Tadagale. (See map on following page.)

Tadagale is more or less a 'line' type village, about 3000 yards in length. The domestic dwelling area is constituted by houses and granaries strung along the sides of a main dirt path which is just wide enough for a single bullock cart — or a jeep — to pass without scraping the bushes and trees. This area is heavily shaded from the intense tropical sun by many trees that grow in the household compounds and along the path; palms and banyans are the most prominent types. The houses are rectangular in shape, with low, slanting roofs, and platform-like porches in front. Among the more prosperous families of the village it is not unusual to find houses of plank construction, with roofs of corrugated iron. More frequently, houses are made of bamboo matted sides and palm thatched roofs. Every two or three houses share a well, which is simply an unlined and uncovered hole of perhaps ten to twelve feet in depth. In almost every compound there is a vegetable garden, from which the family supplies itself and realizes some cash income by the sale of any surplus.

To the east of Tadagale's dwelling area, perhaps five hundred yards distant and running parallel to it, is a railroad line, which begins in Rangoon and terminates at Mingaladon, about five miles north of Tadagale. A small railroad station is located at the eastern terminus of the path on which one finds oneself immediately after crossing the bridge that leads into the village. The villagers do not use the railroad nearly so much as they use buses, which run from Tadagale to Rangoon frequently.

Beyond the railroad line, still farther east, lie the paddy fields, extending out to the winding Pasundaung Creek. This creek begins at the southeastern tip of Rangoon, where the Rangoon and Pegu rivers join, and flows in a twisting course northward to separate Rangoon and the heavily populated area immediately north of the city from the sparsely settled area to the east.

Tadagale's climate is that of the tropical monsoon belt, with three well-defined seasons. From the end of October to about the end of February is the Dry Season, characterized by the absence of rain, with cool mornings and evenings. The daily maximum temperature is in the 80's and the humidity is moderate. English-speaking Burmese call this season winter; at night it is cool enough to sleep under one light blanket. The Hot Season commences at the beginning of March and lasts until June. Temperatures rise to daily maxima in the middle to high 90's, the earth is parched and cracked, and the loose dirt on the village paths, caught by occasional breezes, forms choking

342 514 In U Myaing's house the lavatory is in the kitchen and is walled off with woven KYU (kind of fiber) mat. There is a hole cut open in the board flooring, and the area underneath this opening also is walled off with woven KYU. U Myaing and family did not take their meals in the kitchen but in the house proper.

361 368 346 The PHON-GYI KYAUNG or monastery is located further downstream from the village. It is a two storied brick building comprised of nine rooms, each 6 TAUNG square. Children are not taught here but learn [872] [764] their lessons at the government school. This school, which is on YWA-GYI-HET side, teaches pupils up to the tenth standard. Below the PHON-GYI KYAUNG is the cemetery.

The houses in the village are separated one from the other by eight feet on each side. The rows of houses facing the river have porches on 342 both sides. U Myaing's house is typical of those found in the village - some may be more elaborate, some less. His house had been built only 435 six or seven years, and cost Rs. 3000/- at that time. There are no [651] accounts for each of the separate items and U Myaing does not remember. The land was free and they did not have to pay any revenue on it.

[366] Separate from the houses and on the riverside is a huge platform built [252] to process fish including the making of NGAPI. U Myaing had no land that he owned round the house, although he could use the land directly in front of the house for various purposes.

U Myaing describes his house as follows;

342 592 "It is a wooden house, made of wooden posts - a two storied structure. The roof is of slates. Walls are of SHI-NGA-MU wooden boards (boards 8 inches wide and about ½ inch thick) and there are four rooms. Other people have similar houses. It is a LAY-BIN-KIN (a four-tree-house or a house which has four supporting poles across the front) and all seven of us live in the house. We drop a kitchen from the back and cook there. The kitchen has three windows at the back, with one door leading into the house. We all live together in three rooms. We keep bedrooms. (U Myaing is speaking of a sketch of the house here). This side is for visitors - there is a room for people who come to buy goods. The [366] old mother and the children live in one room and I and my wife in another with the smallest child. We eat in the front part of the house in one room at the foot of the sleeping place. There are nine 6 TAUNG rooms without partitions on each of the two floors. The sides of the house are enclosed with timber planks of IN wood, but the bedrooms are also partitioned off. It is very wide and roomy to live in. The floor is made of teak planks."

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It will be noted that most of the living takes place on the downstairs floor where the bedrooms and the porch are located. The alter is also located downstairs

U Myaing explained that the alt r should be upstairs but it was more convenient downstairs. The posts on which the house rests rise a few feet above the ground. In all there are about 15,050 cubic feet enclosed by the house. Of this amount 1450 cubic feet are used for sleeping quarters for the family, 729 cubic feet is devoted to religion in the alter room, and 800 cubic feet is used in the kitchen for preparing food. The rest of the space is for social functions including visitors and relaxation, with some space used for storage.

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In Pathma there were no beds and no chairs except for one deck chair which had been handed down to U Myaing from his father. There were however, five small stools about four inches high and measuring about 12" by 6". These stools did not have four legs but instead were made of one flat board hammered onto two boards laid on their ends. They had one four legged stool measuring 2½ feet by 1½ feet and about 8 inches high. This was utilized as a chess board. (U Myaing and three or four others played chess four or five times a month in the afternoons. Their house was the only one in the village to possess a board and chessmen, U Myaing having received it from a cousin.) There was another stool about two feet high and one and a half feet square to hold the KYAUK KAR food carrier.

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There were also two round Burmese tables. The smaller one was about three feet in diameter and one foot tall. Ma Aye Myaing could not estimate the diameter of the larger one but she remembered that eight men could eat at a time at this table, and that people who gave charities often came to borrow it for that reason.

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There was a three legged stand for holding two water pots. The pots were placed on two horizontal triangles formed one about two feet above the other by the peices of wood holding together the three upright feet of the stand. This stand was made by U Myaing at home.

They also possessed two cupboards but of which had been handed down to U Myaing by his father. The first one, used for holding clothes, was three TAUNG high, two and one half TAUNG wide and little less than one

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Home in Lewis Road Refugee Camp

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Since November 1949 U Myaing and his family have been living in the Lewis Road refugee camp, Rangoon. They had stopped at half a dozen places prior to their present abode, but their living had been on very much the same scale. The refugee camp is located about a mile north of the Shwe Dagon Pagoda on a hilly promontory. The area is not far from Tiger Alley (U Wisara Road) and along this road and others nearby, huts have been built up within the last few years, largely by war refugees. The buildings of the camp were earlier used as headquarters and barracks by the People's Volunteer Organisation (P.V.O.). The P.V.O. is an offshoot of the Burmese Patriot's Army following the end of the Second World War. It was originally an army, but after independence was converted into an "organisation" for political purposes. A Yellow Band and a White Band section developed and the White P.V.O.s becoming insurgents.

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The vital statistics of the camp as given by U Khant, the school master are as follows:- 269 families comprised of 856 adults (LU GYI), 211 young people (LU LAT), and 33 infants (NO SO) live in 15 huts . The number of families in each hut ranges from 9 in the smallest to 36 in the largest. The infant category includes those babies who are still breast feeding - up to one year of age. The adult category begins at the age of voting - 18 years. The proportion of the three categories as shown in the totals remains fairly consistent for each of the houses indicating that there are no special age-grade habitations. The refugees come for the most part from the Delta area of Lower Burma, from the districts of Pantanaw and Bassein but they have not organised themselves in their huts according to the district or village from which they come. The assignment of space has been on a pragmatic base according to who arrived at what time. The buildings consisted for the most part of rectangular huts measuring 30 feet by 60 feet with woven split bamboo walls and thatched roofs. When the area was converted into a refugee camp, each family was assigned a certain space which they then partitioned off. A map of the refugee camp area shows a haphazard plan. The only

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[792] 722 361 792 361 apparently meaningful locations would be the huts of the PHON-GYIS located on the peripheries of the camp on local promontories.

The new PHON-GYI KYAUNG near the entrance of the camp was built by others, not by the refugees. The one at the back, on the other hand, was built by contributions among the refugees themselves. One PHON-GYI and one small boy reside here. The PHON-Gyi from the new KYAUNG comes for HSOON (food giver to begging monks) once in a while. A third PHON-GYI KYAUNG at the far rear also was in existance before U Myaing's arrival at camp. Here also resides one PHON-GYI and one small boy.

723 362 U Myaing came by himself to camp and took possession of the place he now lives in. The camp-head assigned the place to him. When they first arrived in Rangoon they had to rent a room at HPA-HSA-PA-LI-KYETTHIT (an area of huts organised by the Anti-facists Peoples Freedom League, the political party now in power) for a period of 2½ months at Rs. 17/8 per month. This was because they did not know of the refugee camp. They learnt of its existence just as their money ran out, and they shifted over.

U Myaing is of opinion that since he is installed in these quarterssno other family will come to put up there, but admits that if they did, he would not have any right to drive them out, since he does not own the place. He is a comparative latecomer to the camp. Other families have been here for nearly two years now, while U Myaing arrived only 10 months ago. The extensions to the eaves of the roof were made by U Myaing. The condition of the camp when he came was very much the same as it is now. Only two additional huts and one PHONGYI KYAUNG have been erected since. He considers that his quarters are slightly better off than those of others in that there is less bustle and confusion in the buildings.

722 342 The quarters assigned to U Myaing are formed by the extension of the eaves of a rectangular house. The house, which measures 60 feet long by 20 feet wide has bamboo matwalls about 10 feet high, is floored with stone paves and has six windows 3 feet square on the long sides. There is a door 3 feet wide at one end. The roof is gabled with a ridge pole from which 8 rafters sixteen feet long are attached. The extensions of the roof consist of thatched leaves on

a bamboo frame extending for about eight feet. The interior of the house contains piles of small boxes in which the bones and ashes of the P.V.O. dead are stored. Consequently no one lives inside. Seven families live under theeaves on three sides of the house along a narrow strip nine feet wide. The area is divided into a number of rooms "6 TAUNG square - the same room size as in the Pathwe house." U Myaing's family occupies 2½ such rooms at the corner of the building. The hard space varies from 8 feet against the wall of the house to less than two feet at the edges of the eaves. A break in the eaves forms an entrance at the corner. Figuring one room to be equivalent to a 6 foot square room 3½ feet high, we arrive at a total of 315 cubic feet of living space for the 2½ rooms.

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One and a half rooms are covered with a slightly raised bamboo floor on which U Myaing and his family sleep. A space 6' long by 2' wide is used as a work area and for social purposes, but this is not rigorously claimed, since the adjacent family frequently uses it as a storage space. In speaking of the refugee camp quarters U Myaing says:

> "It is very narrow (cramped) here. We eat and sleep in the same place. At Pathwe we kept 2 rooms separately to sleep in. Our house there was very wide and roomy. Here we sleep and cook all in one place."

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The sleeping and eating area is separated from the adjacent family by a woven split bamboo partition about 5 feet high; at five feet three inches from the floor, a number of bamboo poles criss-cross to form rafters on which objects are stored.

Here the sleeping mats are rolled up, along with sleeping equipment which consist of U Myaing's wooden pillow, makeshift pillow of rag bundles, 1 holey woolen blanket. One mosquito net used by U Myaing and his wife is also suspended from these rafters. At the far end of the bamboo flooring, there are three baskets. One of these baskets contains the women's clothing; another contains rice. Two clay pots are at the side. The altar consists of a slant board placed on the wall above the sleeping area and equipped with a flower vase. The objects found in the cooking area are: "U" shaped fire area made by 3 bricks touching on edge, bamboo stool for Ma Aye Myaing, hollow bamboo blow tube for starting fire, cooking pots,

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cloth, small enough to keep mosquitos out. The other kind was made of plain cloth to keep out the smallest insects. The nets are rectangular for a single bed, square for a double. They are suspended over the bed on a wooden framework and tucked under the mattress. Pathwe: three were used by the family and two kept in reserve. Each lasted 4 or 5 years. The reserve nets cost Rs. 60/- each, the others Rs. 40/- or 45/- each. Camp: one old one was brought from Pathwe, this is used by U Myaing and his wife. The rest of the family have none. Two are desired.

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TA-BYET-SEE, broom: The hand broom is used to brush out dust and dirt from the floor of the house. It is about 2 feet long, 2 inches in diameter and consists of bent over bunches of stiff reeds bound at the top by a more flexible reed strip. The one used in camp cost 12 annas in Rangoon.

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Burmese Concepts about the Home.

The following Burmese ideas about the home were secured mainly from Ko Maung Than, my research assistant.

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The Burmese regard the MIN-YAR (home place) with great love, and as the most essential feature of life. The head of a family will frequently admonish: "My young ones let us remain with our nest intact and our eggs uncracked", this is also a common prayer. The ideal is to preserve the family home with necessary repairs in its original form. Wooden (teak) houses are preferred to bamboo. The husband and wife are partners in the ownership of the home which they start at marriage. Indeed, the word for "marriage" MIN-DAUNG-PYU (Home-separately-build) emphasizes the importance of building a home upon starting a family. In villages the mother and children spend almost all of their time in and around the home. Since the Burmese are especially sedentary, short journeys being unusual and infrequent events, the house is the spot where he lives and dies. It is furthermore his "castle" and place of security within which he is "ruler".

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Each house is under the direct protection of MIN MAHA-GIRI one of the 37 major nats of Burma. He controls the fortunes of the family and in return is revered. A coconut, the symbol of MIN-

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342 MAHA-GIRI, is found in nearly every house (a junior member of a
776 family need revere only the symbol of the senior member of a family).
782 A dried coconut with attachment stems is placed in a basket, the top wrapped with a KAUNG-BONG (Head-wrap) of red and white cloth streamers and the basket hung on a nail to the primary corner post of the house. It must be adjusted correctly, and periodically sprinkled with sandlewood water. An interesting story explains the use of the coconut symbol.

773 MAUNG TIN DE, a blacksmith of great powers had two beautiful sisters who he feared would be coveted by the king of the city in which they lived. He asked them for this reason to remain in seclusion. One day he returned from work to find them gone. He became very angry and pounded his anvil till the city shook and the people suffered from earache. For a while he eluded persuit but was finally caught and burned to death. Afterwards he became a powerful nat called MIN MAHA-GIRI with powers of protecting households. Since the coconut signifies coolness and thirst-quenching it came to be offered to the nat who had died from fire.

MIN MAHA-GIRI is consulted if sickness or other misfortunes visit the family. At such times the head of the family checks the coconut offering to make sure it is in good condition. If not this is remedied for much misfortune could be the result of MIN MAHA-GIRI's displeasure at being neglected. When a journey is contemplated he is also appealed to for protection. A lesser nat TON GIN O is in charge of the kitchen and more specifically the hearth. Ko Maung Than knew little of this
[563] nat since it is of minor importance or not considered in Mon households.

342 The home is very important as a place for socio-religious functions
[788] many ceremonies involving groups of people are observed or in part
[574] take place in the house (see below in socio-religious section). Social visiting is also common and much enjoyed. Hospitality, related to but differentiated from charity, gains merit for the host. There is a saying that visitors "come only when the home is pleasant."

512 The home, of course, performs a major "function" as a sleeping
805 place, and there are many beliefs and observances in connection with
513 sleep. The evening hours are divided into LU NYAT THET SHIK (children

quiet), the time when the children become quiet, is on 7 to 8. 512
9 to 10 p.m. is known as THATKYI-KAUNG-CHA (oldage-head-drop) when 805
the elders begin to nod; from 11 to midnight and beyond is LUKLIN-PYAN 513
CHAIN (Bachelors'-return-time) when young men complete their carousing and return to sleep. AND (dawn) comes at the second cocks'crowing (first is at mid-night) about 4 o'clock. The KALA-DET (Indians-marching in) hollow wooden drum is struck in the phongyi-kyaungs at this time to awaken the village. The women who prepare breakfast, and the old folks who rise to worship appear at this time - but others may sleep on for an hour or so.

It is obligatory to wash the legs and feet before retiring. In 513
warm weather a mat is preferred for coolness - but in colder and [515]
damp weather a mattress is considered necessary for protection. 782
Prayers taking from 2 minutes (most) up to considerably longer are 828
generally said before bed-time. These praise Buddha and include such supplications as "may I be lifted up to heaven soon." Dreams may be good or bad according to the disposition of the note. Certain dreams have meanings applicable as omens. It is during sleep that [775]
the ghost of a recently departed loved one contacts the sleeper and, sometimes, succeeds in luring him away permanently.

Analysis of Home Standard in Pathaw and in Refugee Camp. 511
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The Pathaw home was in nearly every way superior to refugee camp home. Let us examine the nature of this superiority and attempt to see the adjustment which U Myaing made in the refugee camp. The Pathaw home was an independent unit as compared to the refugee camp apartment-like home. However we may not assume that U Myaing found this a disadvantage, since living in Pantanaw was "close". The quarters in the one case were separated by half a dozen feet and on the other by a bamboo partition. An important difference is that the Pathaw home was owned by U Myaing and he had inalienable rights there, whereas the refugee camp apartment was loaned to him for a short time period.

Only about one fiftieth of the space was available in the refugee camp (15,000 cubic feet in Pathaw, 315 cubic feet in camp.) However, 511
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much of the Pathwe space was not vital in that it was used for social or storage functions only. 2987 cubic feet were used in Pathwe for sleeping, cooking, and religious purposes, approximately 20% of the total amount of space. However, all of the space in the refugee camp was used for these vital purposes. About 1/10th of the Pathwe space for these functions was available in the camp. In commenting on the differences, U Myaing especially stressed the lack of space and the fact that all functions had to be done in the same enclosure. He did not seem particularly bothered about the lack of space for social functions or visitors.

There seemed to be no difference regarding costs of housing - non-existent in both cases beyond the original investment in Pathwe. Also there is no difference regarding use of land surrounding house. The reduction of space available for the altar from a six tsung room to a place on the wall seemed to be regarded lightly. The Pathwe house was undoubtedly healthier with its windows and open space, and this handicap will be further discussed under the heading of health.

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There is considerable difference in the house furnishings of the two places. The quality and the quantity of the objects in the refugee camp are considerably lower. The bric-a-brac (porcelain duck glass elephant, and porcelain water jug) were lost in Pathwe and regretted because of sentimental value. The earthen-ware jars used for storing fish have no use here and are not "desired", but the HSOON vessels would be useful now. These would cost about Rs. 25/- apiece here. The KYAUK-KAN food carrier is also desired and this would cost Rs. 10/- here. Mosquito nets for Daw Aw Zar and the children would certainly be desirable, but these would cost over Rs.30/- even if made from cheap plain material.

[264] The tables used in Pathwe are not found in camp since the family sit on the floor on the mats and hold their dishes in their laps, and one stool is used in camp and this by Mr. Aye Myaing in preparing the food. Storage containers including cupboards and boxes have been dispensed with and their place taken by baskets in camp. The bedding in camp lacks the comforts of mattress and adequate mosquito nets and pillows. The point must be made however, that U Myaing's family is used to sleeping on hard surfaces and it may not be supposed that the

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426 593 or her daughters or sons who are financially well-to-do. U Myaing's sister who lives in Rangoon has given help to the eldest daughter by housing her near her cheroot-rolling job. The pattern of mutual aid among the relatives is strongly developed among the Burmese. "A tree will support a thousand birds" emphasises the importance of the relative who makes good for the rest of the family.

Relationship of Family to Community and State

602 621 A large portion of the Pathwe community were related to U Myaing. Consequently many reciprocal activities fall within the family group. Most of the activities were prescribed by virtue of being a member of the community rather than by kinship ties. Such activities include cooperation in house raisings, funerals, marriage festivals, SHIN PYU ceremonies where the family involved needs help. Unpleasant occasions such as funerals demand everyone's attendance if not financial participation. 602 621 476 On pleasant occasions the participants are apt to be one's friends and relatives. When someone builds a small house or puts a new thatch roof on, the other villagers come to help. He does not have to pay the workers anything or even feed them. He has only to cook and prepare for them the raw foods and chillies, onions, etc., which each one brings for himself. [342] This statement, however, holds true only when small houses are built. Regular carpenters have to be hired to build the big ones. U Myaing frequently helped to build other people's houses - small houses that could be completed in a day. Help of this nature is offered without asking.

764 621 476 When a person dies in the village, the villagers all go to the house and certain elders help to bathe and dress the corpse and place it on the bed, where it may be kept anywhere from three to seven days before being taken out and buried. The ground for burial is bought at the ceremony for the price of one pice. Now, in keeping with the general inflation, the price has risen to one anna. The grave is dug by the young men's group. The young men of the village carry the bier, or pull the bullock cart on which the coffin rests, and dig the grave. They also provide the orchestra. For performances on the night of the death and the day after a Burmese orchestra is engaged at the rate of Rs. 50/- to Rs. 100/-. The various visitors who come to condole with

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

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12. BABY'S BATH.

CHAPTER II

CHILDHOOD

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13. THE RATTAN CRADLE (PAKET).

THE cradle and the flower-stand are the two things that strike one in every Burman dwelling by the care bestowed on them. The plainest cradle has a turned rail and a carved headpiece (p. 8). The cradle swings by ropes to which the mosquito curtain is tied. The bed is made of a cotton mattress and a few plies of cloth. The infant is swaddled while its mother is lying in, and for a week or two later according to the season of the year. After that it wears only necklets and bangles. The first clothes the child gets are for grand occasions, after it has learned to run about and take care of itself. When the mother has recovered, she takes her babe with her wherever she goes, and if a wood or cane cradle is not handy she slings the infant in a plain hammock of cloth (No. 284). The Burmans do not carry their young children in a sling on the back like the hill people, but on the hip as soon as they can sit up (Nos. 327, 424).

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When the babe is hardy enough to go without covering, it spends its waking hours on a smooth mat spread over a springy bamboo floor which somewhat

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

14. BURMAN MOTHER AND INFANT.

tempers Nature's discipline of knocks and bumps, as compared with the bare hard ground of the Indian hut. Nevertheless the young Burman's converse with his environment is unrestricted enough. By the time he is a year old he may be trusted to himself on a flimsy platform many feet off the ground or over the water. There are few things in the way of the child that it may not handle. The very cheroot its mother is smoking is a coveted plaything. The daily bath at the river-side or well has familiarised the child with another element. It may rush out into the first tropical shower and splash to its heart's content with its older playmates in the first tepid puddle. The Burman's regular exclamation of wonder or fear is "mother!"—*amè*.

When the child is a few months old, relatives and friends are assembled and entertained with tea and sweets to witness the ceremony of piercing the ears and giving a name. The Burmans have no patronymics. The name is chosen from a set of current euphemisms proper to the days of the week and their planets, according to the star presiding over the day of birth. The fancy of the parents and the prognostics of the soothsayer unite to decide the choice. Names are single or are compounded from two series (in Arakan from three). Common names, beginning with the "Sunday-son," are Ôn, Kyaw, San, Shwe, Po, Tha, Dun. Men's and women's names are taken from the same sets; only the courtesy-prefixes differ (p. 74). The needle-hole made in the lobe of the ear on the naming-day is expanded by means of plugs and rolls of leaf. In the course of a few years the lobe takes a plug one-half to three-quarters

15. MUDLARKS.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

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120. CLEANING RICE WITH THE HAND-MILL.

in every town. A basket (*din*, bushel) of cleaned rice (*tan*) costs three to four rupees, and lasts a man about a month. The loss of volume in cleaning is about twenty-five per cent., and the cost of the unhusked grain about one-third of that of rice. For cakes and sweets, rice is ground with water in the Indian stone hand-mill. After first soaking, it is passed through the mill repeatedly until it forms a creamy fluid, which is strained and used while fresh. Wheaten bread is a novelty.

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The houses in Burma are mostly built of bamboo. The giant bamboo (*wabó*), a denizen of the evergreen hills, is cultivated in the plains for house-posts and masts and side-buoys of boats. Its culms attain a height of eighty feet and a girth at the butt of two feet. Every bamboo jungle supplies the rest of the material for the house. No tools are needed for bamboo work, but the universal *dá*—a sabre, trimmer, chopper, according to its proportions (No. 231). With the *dá* the bamboos are hewn, split open and slit into withes (*hnl*) for lashing. Thin-walled bamboos are opened out into broad planks for the walls of the houses (*tayán*). Stout thick-walled bamboos are shaped into narrow planks for flooring, or the floor is laid of round bamboos laced down at intervals. Loose planks of wood are becoming general for floors, even in houses built of bamboo (p. 119). Every Burman can handle the *dá*, but not so expertly as the hill people. The house-posts, floor-girders, and principal frames are frequently of timber, and outlast several relays of the bamboo-work, which decays in a few seasons. The inducement to keep a material clean and neat which has soon to be replaced is not great, and engenders negligent habits. In the better houses, bamboo is only used for the walling and the roof rafters.

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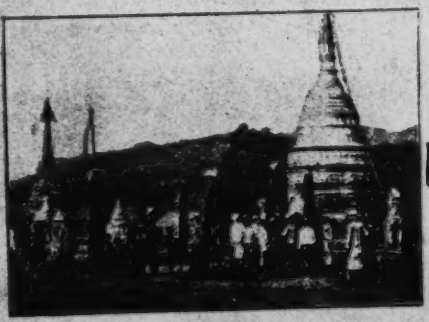
121. WINNOWING GRAIN IN THE WIND.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

122. CUTTING GIANT BAMBOO (WABO).

and the roof-rafters. Straight trees are selected for posts, and are either left plain, or the sapwood is dressed off, or they are dubbed octagonal; the timbers are rough-hewn with the *dâ*. Posts of hard and durable wood (*pyinkadô*) are also squared, and the scantlings for the timbers cut with the saw. A special significance attaches to the posts of the house. It is thought unlucky if birds alight on them before they are roofed in. Sham bows and arrows are set at the heads of the posts to scare them (*hngemmana*). Besides the miniature bow-and-arrow stuck in bazár goods to scare crows, this is the only form in which the long-bow and arrow survive in Burma; in practice, arrows are used with a crossbow (No. 204) and pellets with the plain bow (*le*), and that not extensively. Another curious custom is the one of laying a piece of cloth between the head of the post and the wall-plate as a propitiation to the *nat* of the tree (p. 187). Before the large posts of temples are reared, their heads are hung with offerings, which the workpeople afterwards share among themselves. The front bays of the house have a floor only a few feet off the ground (*kyaunding*)—unless where the flood-levels require it to be higher—making a verandah, the common or unenclosed portion of the house, free to strangers. The back bays have a floor about four cubits off the ground or above the lower floor. A bamboo or wooden ladder connects the floors. The upper floor is enclosed all round, and has one or two bays partitioned off. A pent-roof covers the cooking-place and grain-bin, where the rice-pounders and implements are stored as well; or else there is a shed for



123. BEARING THE POSTS OF THE WUT.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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124. LASHING THE ROOF-POLES.

these (No. 16). Frequently the water-stand is a separate erection, opening into one of the lower bays. There are several kinds of roof-thatch, of which the commonest is *thekkè*, a broad-leaved grass, bound on sticks of split bamboo. The leaf of the *dani* palm makes the best thatch. The large leathery leaf of the *in* tree is also used. A roofing material called *wagát* is made of bamboo shingles, of which strips are held together by three or four wattles, handy for tying to the rafters. This material is less inflammable than *thekkè*. Tiles and modern wooden shingles can only be used on strong roof-frames. Floor-mats of the stoutest kind are [285] plaited of the outer silicious rind of the bamboo (*knt-dyaw*). Common mats are plaited of the inner fibre split into withes, one half to three-quarters of an inch broad, and about one-twentieth in thickness. Finer and more pliable mats are made of the reed *thábáw*. The finest of all are made of the outer skin of the *thin* plant. *Thimbyu* is the universal sleeping-mat.

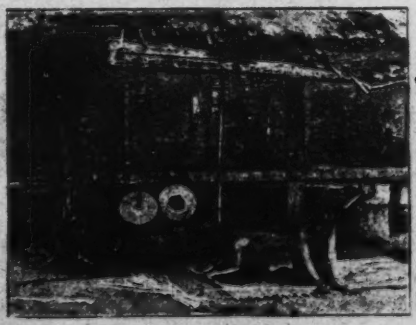
286 The cloth used in Burma is now, for the most part, imported, as are also the
283 cotton yarns, both plain and coloured. Nevertheless, the domestic cloth industry continues to flourish in the villages. Native textile cotton (*wá*) is of two varieties, one white, the other dun. The cotton, after being culled from the plants, is seeded between wooden rollers. The fibre, caked together by the rollers, is scutched by flicking it off the string of a bow into a basket, where the fibres disperse again. It is then worked between the palms into flakes convenient for the spinner (*baing-hngin*). The plain spindle, common [413] everywhere in India, is obsolete in [285] Burma where even the hill-people use the wheel (*yit*). With the exception of the stuff for the

125. PLAITING WALL-MATS.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

With the exception of the stuff for the recluses' robes, cloth is not dyed in the piece, but in the yarn. Dyes used for cotton are also chiefly imported, but the indigenous dyes continue to be used for silk. The Burmans excel in yellows, oranges, deep reds, and rich deep greens, which they harmonise with beautiful effect. Their clear blues and purples are indifferent. Except in a few localities, where weaving is a speciality, the men take no share in the industry beyond constructing the looms. Women spin and dye the yarn and weave the cloth. The lath of the loom (*lekha*) is of graceful outline—often elaborately carved—and is furnished with two ornamented metal pins, with loose metal rings, that jangle at each swing of the beam, and proclaim the industry of the young woman, to whom this business chiefly falls. Hence it comes that the loom is a favourite *rendezvous*. The same applies to other occupations of the girls, such as rice-cleaning, when the suitor will take a turn at the heavy part of the work and lounge while the sifting goes on. Common patterns of cloth are tartans, for which two or three shuttle-spools are required. The plainest cloth woven is at least shot with a colour different to that of the warp. The intricacy of a pattern is denoted by the number of spools. Scroll patterns (*cheik*) in silk are called *hmu-tayd* (hundred-spool). The warp is a cubit wide and about twenty cubits long, which makes a man's loin-cloth (*pasó*). The piece is doubled and its edges sewn together along one side; the turn of the cloth serves as a bag or wallet, according as the piece is draped; it has no lining. The *pasó* is hitched round the loins and girt long or short, according to fancy, without the help of a belt; but elastic belts are now coming in. The slack is worn in a bunch in front (*hsbdungzu*) or is thrown over the shoulder.

129. BINDING THE THATCH.



127. PLAITING FLOOR-MATS (*see* p. 60).

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 API Burma
Burmese AP4

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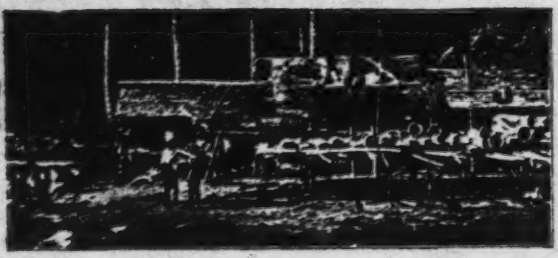
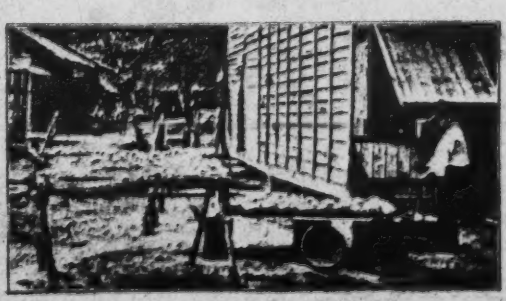


900 SEA-FISHERMEN'S HUTS

to eke their living by. The typical reprobate who is reclaimed in Buddhist legend is the hunter (*mástó*). The religious stigma would probably be less severe if the scope of the chase were not so restricted as it is. In the forests of Burma, with their dense cover, forage for herbivores is scarce at certain seasons, so that game cannot multiply extensively. Such game as there is has a wide beat, and is hard to find owing to the vast preponderance of forest land over clearing. For the same reason the game that forages in the cultivation or on its borders has a limited field in Burma. In the plains near the sea there is a closer approach to the conditions of *shikár* in India, and the chase becomes more of a recognised occupation. There are four species of deer: the *sat* (*sámbar* of India), the *dayè* (porcine deer), *dyl* (barking deer, roe), and a beautiful species peculiar to the Eastern Peninsula, the *thamlu* (brow-antlered deer), which has the form and stature of our red deer. *Thamlu* are found in the plains on the coast of Pegu, and again in the north-west of Burma Proper. On dark nights these deer are hunted with the *ut-on*. A lantern is prepared, with three sides dark. The flare is directed towards the deer, which are so dazed by it that they may be approached up to striking distance. The herd is deceived at the same time by the tinkling of cow-bells. Smaller deer, *dayè* and *dyl*, are caught with nets in the plains of the coast. Hunters watch at their haunts for them to break cover and come out into the cane-fields or other cultivation. A stout net, a couple of yards wide, stiffened at intervals with bamboo uprights, is run across the line of retreat, opposite to

[251]



901 POUNDING NGAPI.

31:Scherman--4A E-4 (no date) 1915 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4
Southeast Asia AL1

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[p. 204]

[For description see page 4, category 116.—Analyst]

341 family (in the year 1887), the Burmese rejects the idea of covering his house with princely trimmings in the manner of the occidental upstart. He prefers to adopt European comfort directly. Now the display of greater luxury no longer jeopardizes property and life, as in the days of Burmese despotism when one had to guard against the avarice of princes and powerful officials.

342 576 The Burmese dwelling, the simple hut just as the resplendent palace and monastery, has only one storey. Of course we must disregard innovations which gradually encroach, through occidental influence. The main reason probably lies in the belief of the people that it is undignified to stay under the feet of others. This would be particularly unbecoming for monks; in a modern two storey brick building in Mandalay which had once belonged to a Burmese princess, I saw a separate staircase, specially built for visiting monks which led directly from the entrance over the ground floor into the upper storey.

342 The size and the layout of the house (3)

3. About the construction of the Burmese house: Gazeteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States (Rangoon, 1900/01), Part I, /205/ Vol. 2, pp. 161 ff., M. and B. Ferrars, Burma, 2nd ed. (London, 1901), pp. 56 ff.; Shway Yoe (Scott), "The Burman, His Life and Notions," 3rd ed. (London, 1910), pp. 76 ff. The above-mentioned Gazeteer, a very informative and important work, will always be quoted below as UBG.

varies in accordance with the needs and the /205/ means of the occupants. The average Burmese house (Plate IV, 1) has its entrance from the broad side which faces the street. There, a veranda (zayanta) projects, which is raised only a little above the ground and which usually ex-

342 tends across the entire front. The veranda has its own roof, and can frequently be closed against the outside with portable bamboo mat walls. It serves as an easily accessible place, even for strangers, also as a workroom and shop, and as a favorite gathering place for the family during the daytime. From there, ladders or steps lead to the elevated rear section of the house, where the livingroom, the bedrooms and the kitchen (mibo) are. The latter is usually [343] detached. It opens to the rear, and has its own platform and means of ascent. The cooking stove [354] consists of a flat box (4) filled with sand and

4. Burmese, Shan, and the mountain tribes of Burma and Assam, also the Siamese and Malayans use the flat, sand-filled fireplace; India and China the mud stove. This is probably due to pile dwellings versus level ground architecture.

ashes on which the wood fire is lit. During the dry season the cooking is done preferably in the open, near or under the house. The simple village house has frequently only one inside room. The veranda, especially where the water level during the rainy season makes it mandatory, is frequently found to be an open wide platform of the same height as the rest of the house (1 1/4 to 1 1/2 meters) (Plate IV, 2). The peasant keeps his rice stores either in the kitchen wing, [343] or in small sheds (also on piles) close to the house where the rice containers, the mortars, pestles for the husking, etc. are kept. Under the piles of the house usually stands the weaving loom on which the women and girls (5) work

[562] 5. As to the women who theoretically (in accordance with religious principles) though not in practice, rank

[562] below the man and are not accorded full value as human beings, one does not consider this a degredation, although to be under inhabited floors (see above)[1] would be considered as a disgrace for others.

•342 industriously. Weaving in Burma is still one of the most important home industries. Otherwise [231] the room under the house is used only for storage of household and agricultural implements, and also at night as a stable for buffaloes and cattle if there are no protective roofs provided for them. On top of such roofs the fodder grass is piled up.

A large Burmese house (Plate IV, 3) gives the impression of a composite of several individual buildings (6) standing on a platform. This is

[71] 6. The accounts of P.A. Thompson, Lotus Land (London, 1906), p. 40, and F. Swettenham, British Malaya (London, 1907), p. 151, show that this Burmese house-type with its detached sections, surrounded by a platform, is also customary in the lowlands of Siam and on the Malayan Peninsula. It is also known in Sumatra, according to M. Moszkowski, "Beiträge zur Entwicklungsgeschichte des Wohnhauses in Ostsumatra" /Contributions to the History of the Development of Houses in East Sumatra/, Archiv für Anthropologie /Archive for Anthropology/, Vol. 37, (1910), pp. 11-13, Figure 21.

P. Sarasin in "Über die Entwicklungsgeschichte des griechischen Tempels aus dem Pfahlhause" /History of the Development of the Greek Temple out of the Pile House/, Zeitschrift für Ethnolologie

[1] [see category 116, page 5.— Analyst]

/Journal for Ethnology/ 39 (1907)
342 pp. 59 ff. has pointed out what constitutes the difference between the above-mentioned composite buildings and the prehistoric pile dwellings.

due to the fact that every part of the building has its own roof. The roofs of the two major sections run parallel to each other and an eave (ye-ta-yauk) is fitted in between. The front part, which opens directly onto the main veranda, contains the livingroom /Figure 1 - Simplest roof. Burmese house. Stronger roof truss./ and visiting room; in the rear are the bedrooms. The kitchen [349] again is detached. At the railing of the veranda, near the livingroom, is usually the stand for the drinking water jugs. Windows are normally only in the front part of the house. At the east wall 353 of the interior of the livingroom is sometimes a very handsomely carved rack (nyaung-ye-o-sin), with a Buddha image, or simply with flower vases in odd /206/ numbers (three or five) which are dedicated to him. They contain fresh leaves of the Nyaung bin (Ficus religiosa), or as a substitute the "Tree of Knowledge," which is sacred to Buddhism, or the hardy, easily obtainable leaves of the aloe plants, etc.

342 The building material for the rural houses is 335 bamboo. For the main posts and beams (yet-ma) wooden logs are used by anyone who can possibly afford them; otherwise the sturdy canes of the giant bamboo are employed. Strong bamboo poles also furnish the crossbeams (sin) /Figure 2 - Roof covers at the village of Kenghkam, southern Shan State Yawnghwe./ on which the floor at a height of 1 to 1 1/2 meters rests. The main posts, standing in pairs, are joined together at the top by crossbeams; on them, in the center, stands a short beam which serves as a support of the roof ridge. On larger houses an additional beam frame is used and on this stands the support

[p. 205]

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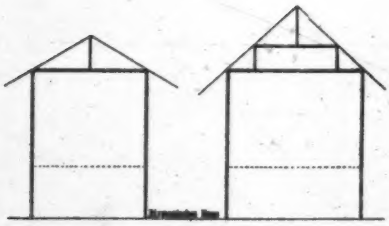

Figure 1

[For description see page 8, category 116.-Analyst]

342 of the roof ridge. Rafters--thin bamboo poles--
335 are placed over this roof structure (Figure 1). Split and flattened bamboo poles are used for floor boards as well as being joined together to serve as doors. The outer walls and partitions consist of frames (zali) with strong bamboo wickerwork (yaing). The outer walls are frequent-
[353] ly decorated with black and white ornaments (Plate IV, 4); more delicate wickerwork is used for the floor covering. Not one single nail can be found in the entire house. The posts and the strong cross beams are mortised with each other; to fasten the roof rafters and the mat walls, tough green ribbons are cut from bamboo and are made pliable by soaking them in water. The doors have no hinges, but turn in sunken in peg extensions on top and bottom of the door cases (7).

[171] 7. The avoidance of nails through fastening with plant fibers (bamboo, rattan) is the rule for the bamboo house all over Burma and Assam. H. Frobenius, ibid., p. 568, points out the same with regard to the central Oceanic architectural area.

342 The houses in the cities are usually built of
824 wood; the famous teak wood which was selected primarily for monasteries and the palaces of the princes has long since become a costly building material. Therefore even the well-to-do people use it only for the main posts; its resinous oil protects it against attacks from termites. For the better housing constructions iron wood (Xylia dolabriformis, Burmese: pyinkado) which is just as durable, is mostly used. For the simplest roofing material the thekké grass (Saccharum cylindricum and Saccharum spontaneum) is preferred in the entire country, with the exception of lower Burma where palm leaf material is popular. The former is a coarse grass related to the sugar cane. Their stalks are tied fringe-

342 like to the bamboo sticks and together with them
924 bound to the roof rafters (Figure 2). The larger leaves of the Ingyin (Shorea robusta) (8) are

8. According to J.G. Scott, Burma, 2nd ed., (London, 1911), p. 500; other botanical explanations by H.R. Spearman, British Burma Gazeteer 1 (Rangoon 1880), pp. 125 ff., H.J. Wehrli, Zur Wirtschafts- und Siedlungs-Geographie von Ober-Birma /Economic and Settlements Geography of Upper Burma/ (Zurich, 1906), p. 111; Ferrars, ibid., p. 227.

sometimes seen as roofing material, pinned together in rows /207/ with bamboo pins and
942 squeezed with poles against the roof (Figure 3).
[656] The grass roofs, particularly during the windy, dry winter season, are, of course, an extreme fire hazard and are therefore now prohibited for the cities. There--wherever brick or corrugated tin roofs have not been adopted--a roofing material, called "wakat," a shingle, cut from
355 braided bamboo work is used. As a poor protection in case of fire, which frequently burns down whole villages, a wooden hook, attached to a long handle is employed to tear off those parts of the grass roof which have caught fire and a damper, made of bamboo braided material is used to extinguish the sparks. These two utensils can be seen in practically every house (cf. Plate IV, 1 and especially Plate IV, 3); sometimes a number of jugs, filled with water, are seen standing at the ridge of the roof for purposes of fire fighting.

342 The Burmese attributes good and bad luck in
777 all his undertakings to the influence of the in-
787 numerable benign and evil spirits (Nat) who were originally outside the Buddhist creed, and he makes his decisions dependent on omens and oracles

342 of soothsayers (9). Consequently he is naturally

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9. Bedin-saya, derived from Sanskrit, meaning Veda teacher. Judson's Burmese-English Dictionary (Rangoon, 1893), p. 782.

very careful when it comes to the construction of his house. With the aid of the soothsayer the building site must be investigated, the day and hour when to start the construction, and the choice of the timber have to be considered carefully. The shape of the posts, the irregularities of their forms, the knots in the wood where the branches were furnish important clues for the fate of the future occupants. The number of the
342 posts varies in accordance with the size of the
776 house. Usually six posts are erected for the main tract and each post has its own name. One of the posts is considered by most tribes as the seat of the house spirits. In the Burmese house this is the southeastern corner post of the main
[764] tract. The body of a deceased person is always deposited close to it until the coffin arrives. A coconut always hangs there in honor of the Mahagiri-Nat (Min Magayi), the household spirit /Figure 3--Shan house with leaf roof, Southern Shan State of Mongpai (Burmese: Mobye)/ and the coconut must always be replaced when the milk
342 dries up. To avoid bad luck which spirits, liv-
776 ing inside the wood knots, might threaten, the
777 tops of the posts, or at least every third one, are covered with white or red fabric patches; sometimes for good luck, some Thanaka paste (grated rind of Murraya exotica) is smeared on them. Even the clerics do not seem to be immune
346 to the evil influence of these nature spirits,
776 whose origins date back to pre-Buddhistic times,
777 for these protective coverings of the posts can be observed not only at residential dwellings, guest houses, bridges, etc., but also at religi-

31:Scherman--57A E-4 (no date)1915 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

[p. 226]

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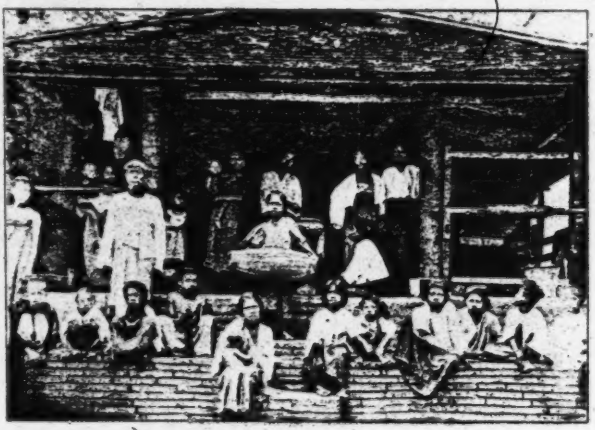

Figure 12

[For description see page 57, category 116.-Analyst]

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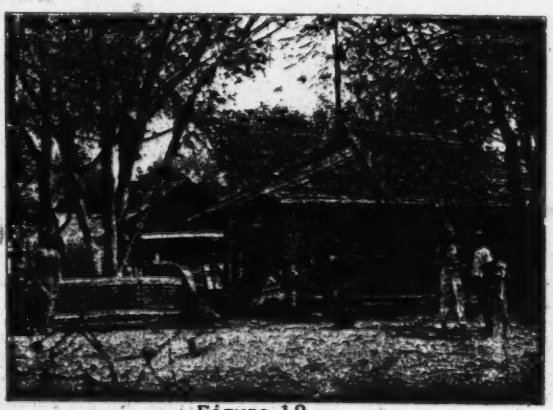

Figure 13

[For description see page 58, category 116.- Analyst]

31: Scherman--74 E-4 (no date) 1915 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4 Southeast Asia AL1 Khasi AR7
K
342 generally used follows from a once ruling law which forbade the Khasi the use of nails for house construction as being "sang," i.e. taboo (78). It remains a question whether the Khasi

78. Gurdon, pp. 30 ff. Cf. above, p. 206, fn. 1.

K house with its curved roof form reflects the
[177] building style of the Bengali, who also in other respects influenced the customs of the Khasi (79),

79. To be sure the roof ridge of the Bengal hut is evenly curved toward both sides and the entrance is from the broad side. This roof style is a distinctive architectural theme with temples and tombs of Bengal, as Monmohan Chakravarti in "Bengali Temples and Their General Characteristics" Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal 5 (Calcutta, 1909), p. 160 explains in detail. But whether the relation with the Pallava architecture of South India exists, as conjectured here on p. 147, seems to me very doubtful.

or whether the roof, sloping down in front and projecting broadly over the entrance wall must be considered as a modification of the veranda awning of the pile dwellings.

* * *

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342 From the numerous types presented above is it somehow possible to prove a homogenous development? /234/ Without vague hypotheses, in view of the inadequacy of the historical sources of the Indochinese ethnographical groups, a line of direction

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can only be hinted at.

Out of the whole series of pile dwellings, I want to lump together as the main types:

1. The Burmese type, i.e. a) the house with its front and entrance at the broad side from where a veranda projects with roof and side walls which give the impression of being an integral part of the house; behind it, above the ground, on a higher level the family rooms; b) the house, consisting of individual roofed sections, surrounded on two or three sides by an open platform. The joining of the posts and roof beams at a) and b) in accordance with the manner indicated above in Figure 1 (80).

80. According to the classification by Frobenius (cf. above, p. 203, fn. 1) the roof support of the central Oceanic architectural area (Barla-Bauten /Barla Buildings/, ibid., p. 577 and atlas, p. 57) No. 5 and 11 "Seram" would have to be used as a parallel.

2. The house of the Shan and of some of the tribes who live in their vicinity (Palaung, Intha, etc.), with a fan-shaped awning which is joined at both gable sides; at the front gable side a veranda over which one reaches the entrance. Post joints and roof beams as in 1.

3. The house with long straight roof, the ridge and sides of which rest on three rows of posts, and which projects far beyond the entrance wall. In front of the entrance often no veranda but more frequently at the rear, sometimes at both places. The Kachin, Chin, and Assam tribes build in this manner.

All the other forms constitute intermediate steps or hybrid types.

The question, what causes the choice of the

BS 342 pile dwelling or of the ground level house cannot, in my opinion, be decisively answered. One might be justified to think in certain instances of hygienic measures, of protection against animals or hostile attacks, of floods, etc., and it might be very instructive to observe here and there the disappearance of the pile dwelling with rising civilization; but no generally valid rule can be arrived at from all this. Decisive is only the tribal custom--for the dissemination, spread, or suppression of which similar conditions are responsible, as they are in the adoption of other cultural values.

31: Scherman--77 E-4 (no date) 1915 AP1 Burma

Burmese AP4
Shan AP11

PLATES

Plate IV

1.

B
342
361 Street in the Burmese village of Koya, upper Burma (upper Chindwin District).

2.

Burmese house in the village of Thindaw, upper Burma (upper Chindwin District).

3.

B
[417] Burmese house in the village of Yuwa, upper
S
[342] Burma (upper Chindwin
[361] District).

4.

House with decorated mat walls. Shan-Burmese mixed style. Village of Pekon, southern Shan State of Mongpai (Burmese: Mobye).

Plate V

1.

S
342 Small Shan house near Lashio, northern Shan State of Hsenwi.

2.

Larger Shan house in Namhkam, northern Shan State of North Hsenwi.

3.

S
[264]
[291] Shan family having
[415] their meal, Namhkam.
[516]

S
[361]

4.

House of the village headman in Lashio Ywama, northern Shan state of North Hsenwi. Shan-Burmese mixed style.

31:Scherman--80 E-4 (no date)1915 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4
Shan AP11

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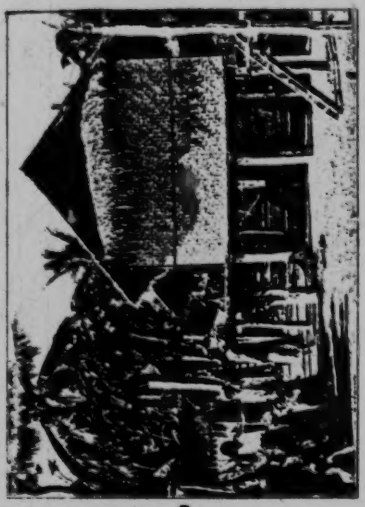

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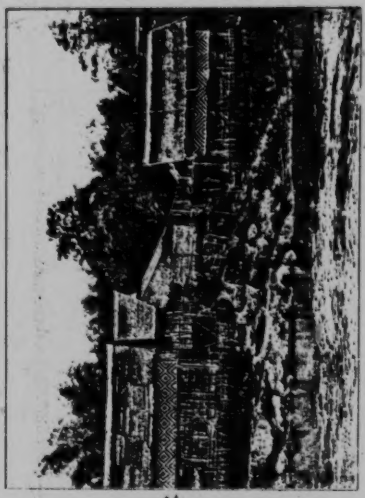

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361

B
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1

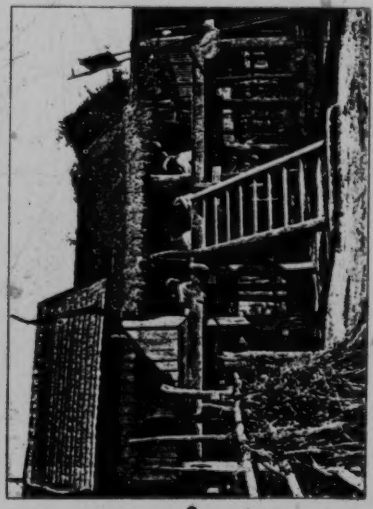

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Plate IV

[For description see page 77, category 116.
—Analyst]